

I'M GLAD I STAYED



1949 - 1979

S. C. Ray

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DI-A MINISTERS

AT FIRST BRANCH

CHURCH, GREENSBORO

I'M GLAD I STAYED

To Mrs Beattie
Taylor with
fond memories
of Dr Taylor
S. C. Ray

1949 - 1979

S. C. Ray

Dedicated to

Marjie

Without whom I probably would not
have stayed
and to

The Members of First Baptist Church
Greensboro, N. C.

This book has been published and is to be presented to members of First Baptist Church of Greensboro, N. C. as an expression of our appreciation for thirty happy years.

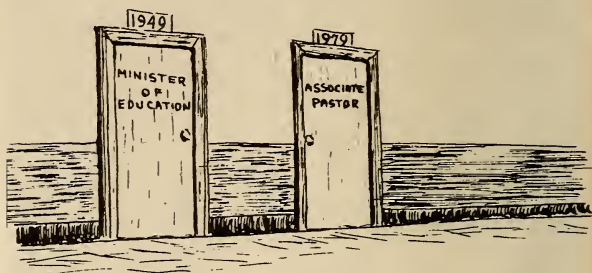
—Marjorie and S. C. Ray
October 1979
Greensboro, N. C.

The drawings on the cover and at the chapter headings are by Jack Heath.

The photograph was given through the courtesy of Vernon Keen.



S. C. RAY



I'm Glad I Stayed

On October 31, 1979 I will complete thirty years on the staff of First Baptist Church of Greensboro, North Carolina. Most of that time I was minister of education. Part of the time I was minister of education/administrator, and for the past few years I have been associate pastor. That sequence of jobs on a church staff is not unusual. Many ministers of education have served as ministers of administration, and many have become associate pastors, but doing those things for thirty years in one church is **unusual!** That is the primary reason for my trying to put these thoughts together.

In a time when frequent moves of church staff members, including pastors, is very common, the thought of one person staying thirty years in one place causes some amazement. During my stay in Greensboro many ministers

of education would have served in five or more churches. As unusual as this "accomplishment" is, many people in Greensboro consider my tenure here normal. Dr. J. Clyde Turner was pastor of the church from 1910 to 1948 — thirty-eight years! Dr. Claud Bowen succeeded Dr. Turner and served as pastor for twenty-five years. Mr. O. E. Lee, one of Southern Baptists' pioneer educational directors, came to Greensboro directly from Southwestern Seminary in 1921 and served until his death in 1941. Although there have been staff members during this time who stayed much shorter periods, long tenures at the First Baptist Church of Greensboro are not unusual.

To be completely honest I'll have to admit that there were times when I would have liked to have moved. My prayer was, "Lord, I think it's time for me to go to another church." The answer from the Lord was always, "When it's time for you to move I'll let you know." When we came to Greensboro we came with a strong conviction that it was God's will, and when the years began to build up and friends were moving about from church to church and state to state, we decided that we would not leave until we had just as strong a conviction that we ought to leave as we had in coming. And to this point that conviction has not come.

In the early years of my being here, when ministers of education were not nearly so numerous as they are now, many opportunities came to consider other church positions. In-

vitations from other churches are flattering. It's good to know that you are wanted and needed, but just because someone wants you in another city doesn't necessarily mean that your work is finished where you are.

Back in 1935, while I was a student at the University of Texas, I made a public decision, at the Palacios Assembly to devote my life to serving the Lord wherever He would lead. At that time there was no doubt in my mind that my place was in religious education in the local church. That was my "Call." Through the years opportunities have come to go into other areas of religious education — seminary teaching, Sunday School Board, state Sunday School secretary's position — but the pull of the local church was stronger.

There are some disadvantages of a long ministry. You have to work harder to stay fresh. After a time, members know what you believe and about how you are going to promote a program. It's easy to get into a comfortable rut and just keep going. You begin to take things for granted. You begin to be taken for granted. On the other hand, there are many advantages involved in staying in a church for a long time. Some of these advantages I'll try to point out in subsequent pages. All in all, I've weighed the disadvantages against the advantages, and the weight is on the side of the long tenure. I'm glad I stayed!



Austin - Home, Church and School

My birthplace was a farm north of Austin, Texas. That farm is now in the city limits of Austin and is completely covered with residential and commercial property. The house in which I was born has recently been torn down. I know that no historical society would have ever erected a sign in front of that house marking the birthplace of S. C. Ray, but it was interesting to drive by there and know that I first saw the light of day in that place.

My parents were Christians, and they and my sister, who is fourteen months older than I, were regular attendants at the First Baptist Church in Austin. I don't ever remember staying at home on Sunday. Sunday was the day we went to Sunday School and church. My sister and I never stayed in the nursery. We always "attended church." The old First Baptist Church building, which has since been

demolished, had aisles coming back at angles. That meant that on the side of the auditorium the back pews were short. About three rows from the back on the west side there was the Ray pew. We always sat in the same place. As a very small child I spent many hours looking at the stained glass window near our pew with the lettering, "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, today, and for ever." Parts of those windows have been placed in the corridors of the new church building some blocks from the original site.

The church building was directly across the street from the governor's mansion. Occasionally the governor would attend church services. He always sat near us, and I felt some childish pride that the governor would choose to sit near the Ray pew.

With the kind of family I had and with regular Bible school and church attendance, it was not unusual that I accepted Christ and joined the church when I was nine years old. We were having a revival meeting. I don't remember who the preacher was. All the Sunday School had been brought into the auditorium for the Sunday School revival service. I was sitting with my class, and I know I was under conviction because I kept hoping my teacher would not speak to me about making a decision. She did ask me if I wanted to accept Christ, and I did and went forward to take the hand of our pastor, Dr. George Green. He baptized my sister and me a few days later. Although I don't remember the

name of the evangelist, I do remember the name of that teacher. She was Mrs. D. J. Edger, and I'll always be grateful that she was interested enough in a nine year old boy to ask him if he wanted to be a Christian.

The week after we were baptized my sister and I received a letter from the B. Y. P. U. director inviting us to become a part of the Junior B. Y. P. U. We went the next Sunday evening and joined; and from that day until this, with just a few breaks, I have been a part of a church training program. Had it not been for B. Y. P. U. (Baptist Training Service as it later became in Texas, then B. T. U., then Training Union), I would likely not be in religious work at all. Many of my really deep spiritual experiences came as a result of Training Union. It was in Training Union that I learned to pray, to develop the habit of daily Bible reading, to speak in public, to participate in many church projects. My best friends were in Training Union. Some of the most memorable social events in my life were "weenie roasts" at Barton Springs and Zilker Park, hayrides, banquets, treasure hunts, and all the other things that Juniors and Intermediates liked to do.

Miss Teanie Mae Reed, now Mrs. Nane Starnes of Asheville, N. C., had a tremendous influence on my life as a teenager. She was secretary and Training Union director at the church. Her wise counsel, her example, her interest in all the young people brought many of us through some difficult adolescent years. She provided opportunities for us to go to the

kinds of places where we could have great experiences. She and two other young people and I went to Mineral Wells, Texas to a state Training Union Convention in her Model-A Ford. I rode in the rumble seat. While at this convention I made a public decision to follow the Lord's leading wherever He might lead. J. Earl Mead, minister of education of the Cliff Temple Baptist Church in Dallas, was president of the convention, and Dr. J. D. Grey preached the night I made my decision. Many years later when I spent the first few days of my four year service in the Army in Mineral Wells I looked back to this convention with a great deal of gratitude.

Miss Reed took me to another place where a memorable decision was made. In the summer of 1935 several of us from the First Baptist Church in Austin attended the summer assembly at Palacios-by-the-sea. Our pastor, Dr. S. G. Posey, was the preacher for the week. At one of the services, after Dr. Posey had preached, I made a decision to give my life to the Lord through religious education.

While I was in high school Mr. J. E. Franklin, who had been president of San Marcos Baptist Academy, became educational director of my home church. It was a part-time job for him as he had left the San Marcos school to work on his doctorate at the University of Texas. He was the first educational director that I ever really knew personally. In fact, I didn't know what an educational director was before he came. He became the kind of man I

wanted to be, and he was doing what I wanted to do. Through the years he has been a cherished friend and an inspiration. When I finished Southwestern Seminary in 1941 he sent me a Bible inscribed "To my best friend, S. C. Ray, Jr., II Timothy 2:15, J. E. Franklin." I kept that Bible with me for four years while I was in the Army, and I still use it all the time.

When Mr. Franklin resigned his position with our church to spend a year full-time at the University to finish his doctoral work, Ray Rozell became our educational director. When he left a few years later, R. Othal Feather came to serve the church. Mr. Feather knew about my decision at the Palacios Assembly, and he immediately took an interest in me. We became very good friends, and he helped me greatly to know more about the business of being an educational director. He was dedicated, efficient, and had a compassion for winning people to Christ.

Othal Feather took me to Fort Worth to visit Southwestern Seminary where he and Rhetta had attended. He introduced me to Mrs. W. E. Kimbrough, who later gave me a job in the dining room there. During World War II, Othal became a chaplain. I was also in the Army, and when my wife and I were expecting our first baby I became ill and was hospitalized at Brooke General Hospital at Fort Sam Houston in San Antonio, Texas. (Marjie spent one week in the hospital when Susan was born — I spent six weeks!) Othal Feather happened to be stationed just a few

blocks from the hospital where I was spending those anxious weeks. He became my personal chaplain, and rejoiced with me when the child arrived safely. We have continued to be good friends through the years, and on two or three occasions he has led Sunday School evangelism campaigns in our churches.

From a financial viewpoint, when I was growing up my family was middle class — maybe a little less than middle class. In fact, during the Depression we were what a lot of people would have called “poor.” But a wonderful thing was that we never really considered ourselves poor. We had so many things other than money that not having much of that didn’t matter. We had family unity. My sister and I never worried that some day our parents would leave us or each other. We didn’t have family quarrels and discord. We liked to do things together. We were never able to afford many long trips, but we went camping up on the Colorado River near Austin and on Brushy Creek close to Hutto. Occasional trips to San Antonio were very special events.

My mother instilled in us early many of the moral teachings that have stayed with us until now. My dad was perhaps the most even tempered person I have ever known. I don’t think I ever saw him lose his temper more than two or three times. After having children of my own and after observing children and studying child development, I know now that my parents gave me something that every child should get from his parents — a sense of

worth, a feeling of confidence. I know there were times when there was a bit of envy for some of my more affluent friends. They lived in bigger houses, their parents drove newer cars, they had better clothes; but I don't remember feeling that they were "better" than we were. I don't remember being embarrassed around them. That's a great heritage!

I finished Austin High School in 1934. There never was any question as to where I would go to college. The University of Texas was within walking distance from where we lived, and tuition then was very low. Two weeks before I finished high school I got a job on the campus of the University with the maintenance department and continued to work until I got my degree. I literally "swept" my way through school. I did well at the University and the year book my senior year lists by my name Phi Beta Kappa and three other scholastic honorary fraternities. I did not participate much in campus activities because of the amount of time I spent working, and because of my interests at the church.



Southwestern Seminary

After my vocational decision at the Palacios Assembly in 1935, I began to set my eyes on Southwestern Seminary. Attendance at Student Week at Ridgecrest in the summer of 1936 reinforced my desire to go into religious education vocationally. I enrolled at Southwestern in the fall of 1939. The Seminary, as was everything else, was just coming out of the Depression. There were about seven hundred students. This was quite a change from the 8,000 at the University of Texas. Also, this was my first experience living in a dormitory, as I had lived at home during college days.

I'll always be grateful that I got to Southwestern while many of the early leaders in the development of that school were still on the faculty. Dr. L. R. Scarborough was presi-

dent. The name B. H. Carroll was still spoken with reverence on the campus. It was my privilege to study with Dr. W. T. Connor, Dr. W. W. Barnes, Dr. B. A. Copass, Dr. T. B. Maston, Dr. J. M. Price, Dr. I. E. Reynolds. More recent additions to the faculty under whom I studied were Dr. W. L. Howse, Dr. Jesse Northcutt, Dr. Frank Means, and Dr. Floy Barnard.

It would be difficult to put into words what these professors meant to me. The school was still small enough that personal contact was possible. Conferences with professors were easy to arrange, and I took advantage of this fact many times. Dr. Howse became a kind of vocational ideal. When he said something with that deep authoritative voice I accepted it without question! I attended Broadway Baptist Church largely because he was minister of education there. Dr. Barnard was a special friend, and I valued her advice which I asked for many times.

As the Seminary was coming out of the Depression, so was I. I had worked in a boys' camp during the summer and had a few dollars to bring with me. Fortunately, room and board were very reasonable. For \$6.00 a week at that time a student could share a room in the dormitory and have three meals a day for seven days a week. Thanks to my visit to the Seminary some months before with Othal Feather, Mrs. W. E. Kimbrough, who managed Fort Worth Hall and the dining room, gave me a job as a waiter. This job paid \$4.00 a week! I borrowed \$2.00 a week from my

sister, who was then working in Dallas, and "got by" without any trouble. With the money that I had brought with me I was able to pay for my dates. Twenty cents for each of us round trip down town on the bus amounted to forty cents. Five cents each for a Coke added another ten cents to the evening's entertainment. Of course, there was no charge for window-shopping and walking through the department stores. A number of nice parks in Fort Worth helped to keep the cost of dating down. My second year in the Seminary I was head waiter in the dining room, and the pay was \$4.50 per week. With that extra fifty cents a week I could do many things I could not do the previous year.

Harold Dill, from Spartanburg, South Carolina, was my roommate at Southwestern. He and I shared many wonderful experiences. We studied together, prayed together, dated together, waited tables together. He has for many years now been on the faculty of the School of Religious Education there at the Seminary. Little did we know when we were there in school together that he would spend most of his life in my native Texas and that I would spend most of my life near his part of the country.

The "parlor" in Fort Worth Hall was a small room with a piano and several old institutional-type leather chairs. There was nothing attractive or pretty about it, but in that room something happened to me that has had a profound influence on my life until this day. During the early part of my second year I walked

from the dining room out to the parlor and saw two very attractive young women whom I had not met. I introduced myself to them. One was Virginia Walden and the other was Marjie Burgess, both from South Carolina. Virginia became a good friend, and three years later Marjie became my wife.

During the entire time I was in the Seminary the world political situation looked more and more like the United States was being drawn into the conflict. Congress enacted a universal draft law. All men of a certain age had to register. I well remember the day we registered at Southwestern Seminary. I had a certain feeling of patriotism for being able to serve my country, but at the same time there was some apprehension as to what this was all leading to. Later, when the draft numbers were drawn, I received a low number — I don't remember what it was, but it was **low**. When I graduated from Seminary with a Master of Religious Education degree in May of 1941, the few churches that could afford an educational director didn't want one with a low draft number who would, in all possibility, soon be in the Army.



Shreveport and Jackson

The Highland Baptist Church in Shreveport, Louisiana was looking for someone to join their staff for the summer to head up Vacation Bible School, Intermediate Week, and summer recreation. Kermit Canterbury, the educational director of the church, came to the Seminary the day before I graduated, and I told him I would come to Shreveport. I was accustomed to the kind of pay I was going to get — room and breakfast and \$10.00 per week. That summer proved to be one of the most enjoyable and profitable I ever spent. Dr. John Caylor was pastor of Highland Baptist Church and it was a joy to work with him. Some of the best friends I have today are people I met during that summer.

In the course of a visit to Austin that summer I went to my draft board and requested a physical so that I would know where I stood in reference to being called into the Army. The doctor told me I had an irregular heart

beat and that he was going to give me an indefinite deferment. It's very strange that after Pearl Harbor my heart beat was "regular" and there was no question about my acceptance into the Army.

The question of "status" for ministers of education was very much alive then. Ordained ministers were not subject to the draft. Many people thought ministers of education should be ordained, and some were. Others were licensed. But it had little effect on the Selective Service Boards. Ministers of education were showing up in uniform all over the country. My personal attitude about ordination was that it was much too meaningful to be used simply to avoid the draft. Later, much the same kind of reasoning was used to suggest that ministers of education needed to be ordained to gain status with Internal Revenue Service. Some of my good friends in religious education through the years have been ordained, and I don't think any of them had any ulterior motives. I never felt that I needed ordination to do what I was called to do. Much, much later when I became associate pastor of my church I was ordained after the church requested it.

With my temporary deferment in my pocket, I accepted a call from the Calvary Baptist Church of Jackson, Mississippi to be their educational director. Dr. Claud Bowen was the youthful pastor of Calvary, which was one of the largest Baptist churches in Mississippi. It didn't take long to settle into my first full-time job after finishing seminary. Jackson

Army Air Force Base was near our church, and we had a good ministry with Service men. I was very happy in Jackson and was dreaming about the time when I could ask Marjie to come there to join me. On Sunday afternoon, December 7, 1941, I went to the church to help set up some props for a Christmas drama we were having that night. One of the men came in with the news that the Japanese had bombed Pearl Harbor. I must confess that I didn't even know where Pearl Harbor was, but it wasn't long until I found out and also found out what significance it would have on me and millions of other young men. A few weeks later I received a notice from my Draft Board advising me that my classification had been changed to "1-A." Dr. Harold Tribble, who was then a professor at Southern Seminary and later president of Wake Forest University, was preaching in a revival with us the week I received my draft notice. He had fun introducing me to friends as "S. C. Ray—1-A." In March of 1942 I received a letter from President Franklin D. Roosevelt saying "Greetings, you have been selected . . ." A few days later I was Private Samuel C. Ray, Army of the United States.



ARMY

After a few days at the induction center at Mineral Wells, Texas, I was sent to Little Rock, Arkansas, to the Medical Replacement Training Center at Camp Joseph T. Robinson. There I spent four months in basic training and about two months as a company clerk. I really enjoyed my stay at Camp Robinson. The educational level of the men in my company ranged all the way from fifth or sixth grade to master's degrees. The instruction we received had to be geared so that all could understand, so I had no particular mental strain. The outdoor activities were enjoyable. I enjoyed the marching, the hikes, the over-night bivouacs, and the simulated medical rescues.

I learned that Bob Bazzell, former Training Union secretary for the state of Oklahoma, was serving as battalion chaplain near my lo-

cation. After I visited his chapel he invited me to teach a Sunday School class there every Sunday. I also attended church services at the First Baptist Church and the Second Baptist Church in Little Rock. A very fine family "adopted" me, and I spent some time in their home. I realized for the first time what this kind of "Christian sharing" really means.

An opportunity came to attend Officer Candidate School, and in the fall of 1942 I went to Camp Barkley, Texas, near Abilene, for three months of the most intensive training I had ever experienced. Here many of the courses were mentally stimulating and challenging. Chaplain B. I. Cherry invited me to come to his chapel services, not to teach or preach, but to lead the singing! Doug Peoples, our minister of music in Greensboro, won't let me sing in public here. I have never told him about my "minister of music" days. After he reads this, maybe he'll change his mind. Dr. W. R. White, later to become president of Baylor University, came to our chapel for some evangelistic services, and I led the music. After three months at Camp Barkley I was awarded my gold bars and sent out as a "ninety day wonder."

From Camp Barkley I went to San Antonio, Texas. I was very happy with this assignment. My home town of Austin was just seventy-eight miles away. During my first day in San Antonio I was told that this station was just a place for assignment. A few days later I found myself in Garden City, Kansas, at a small Army Air Corps training field. The field

was still in the process of being completed. Being a second lieutenant in the Medical Administrative Corps, my first assignment was to be commanding officer of the medical detachment at the base hospital, which assignment I kept for the next year and a half.

Garden City days were happy days. I had an excellent group of men in my detachment. The fellowship among the doctors and nurses at the hospital was good. I made some good friends in Garden City and was frequently invited to be in their homes. Robert W. Lankford, a fellow Southern Baptist, was base chaplain, and he and I became close friends. On several occasions I supplied for him when he could not for some reason be present at a service.

One Sunday I was preaching at the chapel and saw a civilian sitting on the back seat. After the service he asked me where Chaplain Lankford was. I told him that the Chaplain had had emergency surgery for appendicitis the day before and was in the hospital. He explained that the Chaplain had been engaged to go out to a rural church to preach that day. When he realized that the Chaplain could not fulfill his commitment, he asked if I would go with him. I agreed to go, thinking that I could use the same sermon I had just preached. On the way out to the church he told me that they would have dinner on the ground and that they would then have another service that afternoon, and I would preach again! I don't know exactly what I preached about that afternoon, but I got through it. They took up

an offering during the service and when we started to leave the man in charge held out his hand with a one dollar bill and some coins and said that they wanted me to have the offering. I had put in the dollar myself, so I told him just to keep it and put it in the church treasury!

The pastor of the First Baptist Church in Garden City resigned while I was stationed there, and for several weeks I served as the unofficial interim pastor.. I preached for several Sundays until they called another pastor. During that time I made some wonderful friends and that experience is one upon which I look with gratitude. It was my privilege, also, to speak in a number of other churches in Garden City and surrounding towns.

The best experience of my Garden City days was not preaching in the base chapel, or in the First Baptist Church, or speaking for any other organizations. The best experience was my wedding! Marjie had another year in the Seminary after I left, and when she finished she went to Broadway Baptist Church in Knoxville, Tennessee as Training Union Director and pastor's secretary. I persuaded her that being the wife of a certain low-ranking Army officer would be a better than working for a church. We decided that we would get married in the base chapel at Garden City. Chaplain Lankford performed the ceremony; some of the men from my detachment were ushers; and C. B. Staley, a good friend who was a member of the First Baptist Church in Garden City, was best man. Marjie's sister,

Ann, came with her to be her honor attendant. Of course, we're prejudiced, but we think no one ever had a nicer wedding.

Some couples spend their honeymoons in exotic places like Acapulco, or Hawaii, or in the Caribbean. We spent our two day honeymoon in Dodge City, Kansas! We were married on Friday evening, and I had to be back at work on Monday morning.

After some happy months in Garden City we were transferred to Altus, Oklahoma. When that base closed, we were sent to Fort Worth Army Air Field. This was a happy assignment because of many friends we had made in Fort Worth during Seminary days. While we were in Fort Worth Marjie and I taught Sunday School at Broadway Baptist Church. In March of 1946 I received my discharge from the Army. I had worked my way all the way up from second to first lieutenant! But when I got out of the Army I had something I didn't have when I went in — a wife and a six weeks old baby.



Main Street Baptist Church Hattiesburg, Mississippi

For months before my Army service ended, Marjie and I thought and prayed about where we might be led to serve a church. I had been seriously thinking about going back to Southwestern and working on a doctor's degree, and when an opportunity came to serve a church in Fort Worth I agreed to serve with the provision that I could take some courses at the Seminary. After I had accepted this position, and before I had started to work, the minister of music of the church resigned; the church then decided they wanted to get a combination minister of education and music. When they explained this to me with an apology for withdrawing the job offer, I remember that a sense of relief immediately came to me. As I look back now I think I was doing what I wanted to do in staying in Fort Worth instead of letting the Lord lead

me to where He wanted me to be.

Before I accepted the Fort Worth church's position I had had some contact with Dr. John E. Barnes, pastor of Main Street Baptist Church in Hattiesburg, Mississippi. When I told him that I had accepted another job, he wrote that if the situation for any reason changed I should get in touch with him. When the committee from Fort Worth was carefully trying to tell me that the job I had accepted no longer existed, I remember thinking, "I'll go to Hattiesburg." The Lord was now leading!

I did not particularly want to go back to Mississippi. Being a Texan, I would have liked to have stayed in that state. Marjie had lived in Texas long enough to want to stay. We both liked the idea of staying somewhat close to the Seminary for some possible future study. My dad died while I was in the Army, and I felt that I would like to stay within close visiting distance to my mother. But the Lord was definitely leading us to Hattiesburg.

Moving was not a problem. We didn't have anything to move! We had a bookcase I had made in one of the convalescent training shops which I supervised, and a coffee table which was a wedding present. I had bought a 1938 Plymouth in Garden City which was rusted and faded. Before we left Fort Worth I had the Plymouth painted and with our few possessions and our new baby we set out for Mississippi.

The church in Hattiesburg had purchased some property adjacent to the church build-

ing. On that property was a big old two-story house which they "fixed up" for us. You can imagine what our bookcase and coffee table looked like in that house.

Dr. Barnes and the members of Main Street Church would have been frightened if they had known how little I knew and how little experience I had had as an educational director. Four years in the Army had taken me away from the routine of daily church life, and my six months at the Calvary Baptist Church in Jackson didn't qualify me as a veteran in the field. However, I was the first educational director Main Street had ever had. I had enthusiasm and youth and was willing to work hard, and the three and a half years we spent there were rewarding ones.

Those were the days of the two-week Vacation Bible School, the week-long study course for Sunday School and for Training Union, both in the fall and the spring, and the two-week revival. I did something which most young ministers of education do; I spent every night away from home week after week after week. I neglected my wife and baby, and if I had it to do over again I wouldn't do it. Marjie was completely cooperative, but it was not right to bring a young mother to a new town and to a new church and to leave her alone in a big old empty two-story house for weeks. I thought I was doing what I had to do, but I know now that the Lord had called me to be a husband and father as well as a minister of education.

Vacation Bible Schools in Hattiesburg were

great times. We really had some good ones. I'll never forget the planning, the parades, the processional, the picnics, and the really good Bible teaching. Also, we worked for weeks every year on the college student welcome parties. Church work was exciting. Many of the things we were doing were being done there for the first time. Dr. Barnes was a great pastor.

Everyone in church work can look back on a few outstanding revivals. One such revival we experienced at Main Street. We had gone through two or three revivals without the response we really wanted. We became concerned about evangelism in our church and invited Othal Feather to come to Hattiesburg and lead in a Sunday School evangelism campaign. He says that this was the first such campaign he led outside a church that he was serving as minister of education, and that much of what he taught for years in Southwestern Seminary stemmed from his experience with us. For weeks we prayed and visited and studied. When Dr. J. D. Grey, pastor of the First Baptist Church of New Orleans, came to preach, our people were ready for revival. Dr. Grey led personal worker conferences, and along with what we had experienced with Othal Feather, the people went out in the city of Hattiesburg and visited as they had never visited before. We had revival!

In the summer of 1949 I received a letter from the chairman of the personnel committee of the First Baptist Church of Greensboro, North Carolina. I knew only two things about

Greensboro; Dr. J. Clyde Turner, who wrote **Soul Winning Doctrines**, which we had studied, had been pastor there and Dr. Claud Bowen, with whom I worked in Jackson, had recently gone there as pastor. After a great deal of prayer we agreed to visit the church.

We spent two days in Greensboro. They had an old downtown church which was hemmed in with no room for expansion, but they had purchased property on the edge of downtown and were actively planning to construct a completely new sanctuary and educational building. The challenge was there, but we left Greensboro thinking that we had had a nice visit but that our work in Hattiesburg was not through.

Mr. J. D. Wilkins, the chairman of the personnel committee from whom I had received the initial letter, was a very persistent person. When we got back to Hattiesburg and walked into our house, the telephone was ringing; it was Mr. Wilkins. He continued to call every day or two. We continued to pray. There were many good things about Greensboro we liked, but we wanted to be sure. After several days of earnest prayer we felt the Lord was leading us to North Carolina, and I was faced with one of the hardest things I ever had to do — telling Dr. Barnes that we were leaving and telling our good friends and the church membership that our ministry there was coming to an end.



WEST MARKET ST.
BUILDING, 1906-1952

First Baptist Church Greensboro, North Carolina

On Halloween Day of 1949, Marjie and I arrived in Greensboro. We had left Susan in Spartanburg with her grandparents. After settling in at a motel directly across the street from where the new church building would eventually be erected, we had time to get to a Training Union planning supper at the church! And a thirty year round of attending meetings got started.

Going to a new church is always exciting. We liked Greensboro from the start. It was good to be back with Dr. Claud Bowen, the pastor with whom I had worked in Jackson, Mississippi, before entering the Army. The church was growing. Sunday School was filling every inch of space in the old 1906 building and was spilling over into a nearby funer-

al home and the Masonic Temple a half block away. The most exciting thing was planning for the new building!

The church had been thinking and planning for a new meeting place for many years. In the 1930's an anonymous donor gave \$2,500 with the provision that the church raise \$7,500 during the next twelve months to start a building fund. This effort was successful and additional money was placed in the fund. However, the advent of World War II interrupted plans for building for several years. After the war was over inflation began to set in and the original plans for a construction goal were obsolete. Money continued to accumulate in the building fund.

In July of 1950, after original plans had been greatly changed to accommodate larger attendances, bids were received. Ground was broken on Sunday afternoon, August 6, 1950, and at long last First Baptist Church of Greensboro was building a completely new sanctuary and educational building. The sign which had stood on the church property for many years stated that this was the site of the proposed new building of First Baptist Church. The sign also had the words "Let us rise up and build." After the ground breaking, the sign was removed and we were rising up and building!

It was three years from the time I came to Greensboro until we entered the new building. We were handicapped because of lack of adequate space, but these three years were not spent just marking time. A program of

"Men's Fellowship Meetings" was established. We had to use the dining room of the Masonic Temple, which room we used on Sunday morning for an adult department, for these meetings. It was not unusual for three to four hundred men to gather to hear speakers like Duke McCall, Louie Newton, Baker James Cauthen, R. G. Lee, Townley Lord, and many others.

We could not have chosen a more opportune time to be planning the expansion of the Sunday School. These years in the late forties and on through the fifties were the golden years of Sunday School growth. The "War" was over. Television was in its infancy. Big sports events on Sunday were limited in Greensboro almost entirely to the once a year playing of the Greater Greensboro Open Golf Tournament. Very few of our families had mountain, beach and lake houses. Many of our families had one car. At that time we were not surrounded by strong suburban churches. It was easy to reach people.

Churches all over the Southern Baptist Convention were experiencing unprecedented growth. Sunday School weeks at Ridgecrest were filled with great moving testimonies of churches reaching people in large numbers. A. V. Washburn and Herman King were young men just out of military service and were adding their enthusiasm to a great Sunday School program. The man who inspired me most at Ridgecrest was J. N. Barnette. After hearing him for a week tell about Sunday School growth and about the challenge of

working for the Lord through outreach, I just couldn't wait to get home and get to work!

We had three of the largest study courses during the last year in the old building in Greensboro that I have ever experienced. Some of the reason for the large attendances was excitement about the new building. In February of 1951 Jesse Daniel, L. B. Reavis, Lawson Allen and Willard Weeks led us in a "Week of Study for Advance." Enrollment for the week was 537. In January of 1952, Dr. J. Clyde Turner came back to teach his book, **The New Testament Doctrine of the Church**. Enrollment for the week of study was 575. Now I'll submit that that's good attendance for a study course whether it be in the 1940's or the 50's or the 70's.

In March of 1952 Dr. W. L. Howse came to lead us in a week's discussion of **The True Functions of the Sunday School**. That's what we called it. The real subject for the week was "How to Grade Adults in the Sunday School." Some of you will remember that Southern Baptists had found that Sunday School growth depended in large measure upon reaching adults. "Grading" adults by age was working like a charm in many churches. Our new building had been designed for a graded Sunday School. In a few months it would be ready. Our slogan became "The Building Will Be Ready For Us. Will We Be Ready For The Building?"

Dr. Howse helped us look at every facet of grading. We had Sunday School classes with enrollments of 225, 175, 85, etc. Some of our

people were excited about the new program, and some were not! One woman who began to hear about adult grading came to me and said, "I don't think adults are going to like being graded on their Sunday School lessons." But the church had committed itself to a grading program when it adopted the building plans.

The teacher of one of the large men's classes was not too happy with the thought that he would no longer have his congregation each Sunday morning. We had a "testimony" meeting one Sunday morning at which time we brought all the adults in Sunday School together. We had asked several people to speak who were in favor of grading adults. We thought it would be only fair to have this man speak. He began by saying, "We have been led to believe that there would be places in the new building for all our present Sunday School classes. I had rather keep my present class intact. That's my personal desire, but if it's a matter of choosing between what I want and what the church wants, I choose the church!" A young educational director heaved a sigh of relief. Be it said for that man that later, after he had taught a smaller class for a while, he came to me excited about how he could know each man and how Bible study could be effective with smaller groups.

On November 30, 1952 we entered the new building. The previous Sunday we had the farewell service in the old building downtown. This was a happy time, and for many people a sad time. Many of those present had made

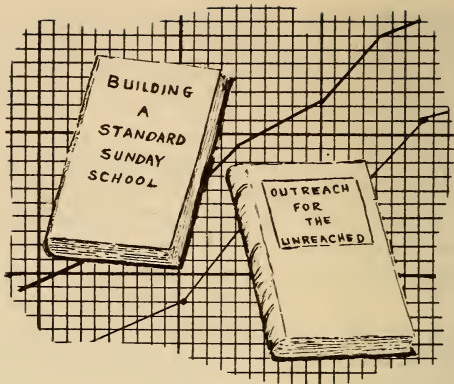
professions of faith and had been baptized in that building. Many had been married there. Many had had memorial services for loved ones there. And for everyone who had known him — this was where J. Clyde Turner had preached for thirty-eight years. On that last Sunday as the sun shone through the beautiful "Vernon window" some who were present heard the voice of Dr. Turner preaching although the present pastor, Dr. Bowen, was actually speaking.

On that last Sunday in the old building all adult classes in the Sunday School met for the last time. After that Sunday, and before the next Sunday, we had no adult organization. We had agreed that the entire adult division would be organized according to age grading principles. All new teachers had been enlisted but had been requested not to tell anyone what class they would be teaching. We did not want class loyalties and teacher loyalties to prevent proper grading. When we went to Sunday School on November 30 in the new building, some eight blocks from the downtown church, all adults were instructed to go to the first floor auditorium. There for the first time we introduced the adult directors (we called them superintendents then). It was explained what age group each director would have, and then all of those of that age group were asked to go with that director to the department assembly room. This was done for the entire division. When they got to the departmental assembly rooms the directors told them what the age grouping of the classes was

to be and asked them to go to their class rooms. When they got to their class rooms their new teacher was there. Some are going to say, "That's a childish way to treat adults," but it worked!

When the last director had left the assembly room with his group I went to the most remote part of the building and stayed in hiding for the rest of the morning. We never did tell anyone where he or she **had** to go. I'm sure that many times there were those who wanted to tell me where to go. I never did figure it out exactly, but I think about 90% of our adults graded themselves into the right class. One of our women's teachers told some of her "girls" which class she was going to teach and some of them went there even though it was not the right class according to age.

The new organization, more space, the excitement of the new building, and the factors already discussed caused us to have great growth for the next few years. Arthur Flake's five points proved successful for us. It wasn't long until we were utilizing all available space in our beautiful new building for classes and departments. We began putting classes on the stage, behind screens, and in offices. This is not an ideal situation, but what a wonderful condition to exist!



Growth and Change

During the years of great growth and expansion our methods were "Southern Baptist orthodox." We went by the book. **Building a Standard Sunday School** served us well. **A Church Using Its Sunday School, Outreach for the Unreached, The Pull of the People** all were studied and followed. We had weekly officers and teachers meetings—fifty two weeks a year! Superintendents met weekly. We graded and we promoted. We sent leaders to Ridgecrest. Our people visited. We had regular training classes. We had study courses for Sunday School and Training Union. Some of our best weeks were January Bible study weeks. Outstanding teachers were invited to come for these Bible study weeks. One of the favorites became Dr. William E. Hull, then professor at Southern Baptist Theological

Seminary in Louisville. He was in our church on at least seven occasions. When we got into the new building we were able to spread out for Vacation Bible School for the first time. We enrolled over 700 in one of those schools.

During those years we had a pretty fair Training Union. It's true that in some of the unions there was a lot of "giving parts," but many adults, young people, and children learned how to stand on their feet and talk before a group, lead in public prayer, and take part in discussions. Lives were changed and God called some of our young people into special ministries through Training Union. Our people knew a lot more about doctrine, missions, and church polity than they do now.

I remember one "enlargement campaign" our Training Union had. At the time we had five adult unions. We believed in growing through division, so during the week's study we set up ten unions to replace the five we had. Those ten unions never got off the ground. In a few weeks we ended up with four unions. That's the only enlargement campaign in reverse we had.

When adult Training Union began to drag in the early sixties (and that dragging may have been our fault and not the fault of Training Union) we began to toy with the idea of having "seminars" on Sunday evening. They weren't exactly seminars, but that sounded good. Our first series of seminars was on different religious beliefs. We invited a number of pastors of other denominations to come and talk to us about their particular beliefs.

We averaged about 350 a Sunday for the eight week series. We thought we had the answer to adult Training Union. This was many more than we had been reaching in the unions. We then had a series on Family Life and then one on Practical Christianity. None of the attendances after that first series ever came up to that one. Some of the seminars were well attended, especially if there were a particularly well-known or well-liked speaker. However, it became increasingly difficult to have speakers and subjects in which our people were interested.

The seminar program didn't build up any group loyalty like the old unions did. If a member wanted to come one Sunday and skip two, there was no checking on him to find out why he wasn't there. There was no building up of a spirit of fellowship and sharing. There was no real personal participation in the seminar. It's true we didn't "give parts," but we didn't do many of the other things that were the genius of Training Union.

We all know what happened in the 60's. Youth were rebelling against the establishment. There was a general feeling of the decreasing importance of the institutional church. Adults and youth alike began to wonder if methods we had been using were really the best methods to use in a church program. Just because we had always done it this way was no longer any reason for continuing to do it that way.

In addition to a spirit of change and rebellion, our people had grown in affluence.

Mobility and the ease of travel made weekends a time for camping, sightseeing, and visiting relatives and friends. Television had come into its own by now. Interesting programs on Sunday evening were keeping members at home by their sets. Television preachers were developing loyalties of their own and church members were sending offerings all over the country to support these programs. Local churches and local pastors were sometimes criticized for not having the glamorous programs that the television preachers were able to produce with the millions they received from viewers. Sunday School attendance began to drop. Worship service attendance began to drop.

For years I had an annual Sunday School superintendents' dinner and planning meeting. At this meeting we always analyzed the year that had just passed. I liked to make graphs of the Sunday School enrollment and attendance showing how much we had gained during the year. For years the graph kept going upward, but now the line started going the other way. (After that happened we didn't use the graph system any more!) We consoled ourselves by saying that we had started two new churches and had lettered out many people to those churches. While this was true, it really didn't make that much difference in our real attendance. Now for a good many years our enrollment and attendance have been on a plateau. Some years we show a little growth and some years a little loss.

Something else happened, too. We didn't

stay as close to the "book" as we had. Our people got so busy that they could no longer attend weekly officers and teachers meetings, so we accommodated them by having them less often. Actually, we didn't accommodate anybody. We hurt our program. Dr. Tippett of the Sunday School Department of Georgia used to say, "You can't do more by doing less," and that's what we tried to do. But there was hope ahead — the 70's were coming!

I don't suppose there was ever anything those of us who had been in church work for a long time looked forward to any more than we did the coming of the 70's. The Sunday School Board had shared all the frustrations of the sixties that the churches had experienced. The coming of a new decade seemed to be a good time to make some needed changes in our organization, our terminology, our literature, etc. Seventies conferences were held all over the country, and we were given little previews of what was ahead in the way of new literature, new organization, and new concepts. It looked great! We needed a change. Maybe this was just what we needed to start that graph upward again.

This is not the place, and I don't have the desire to analyze the effectiveness of this 70's program. Most of the changes were good, needed changes. When we've done a thing for so long in a certain way it's good to show ourselves that there's more than one way to do many things. In our rush to change things I think we threw out some things that were not

replaced by programs as effective as what we had.

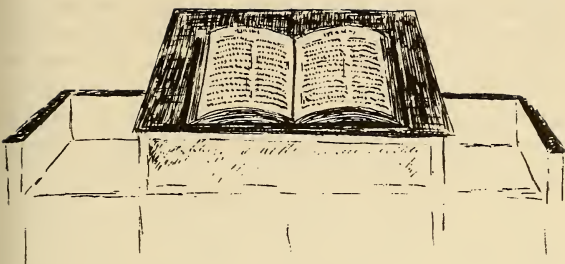
I don't advocate going back entirely to "cubicle" teaching for "Juniors" and "Intermediates," but I do know that in our church we had more children and young people making professions of faith in Christ and joining the church under the plan where a small group of pupils sat in a class room from Sunday to Sunday with their teacher and "studied" their lesson. I also think we have lost something by not emphasizing memorization of Scripture. I know these statements I have made here need to be qualified, but I'm speaking in general terms.

As a minister of education I had sounded off as loudly as anyone about the need for choices in curriculum. The Sunday School Board gave us what we had been asking for. There were choices in Sunday School, and there were choices in Training Union. And there was frustration! We learned that curriculum building was something of which we had been doing very little. We had been accustomed to taking all the prescribed lesson materials and using them for the age groups indicated. Now we had to choose. The availability of choices made many a minister of education pay more attention to curriculum.

From what I have observed, I think something of the same kind of thing happened to the women's organizations. In an effort to modernize the structure and the approach there was less attention placed on a study of missions. Our people right now know less

about Southern Baptist missions, both foreign and home, than they did when mission study was an integral part of the women's program.

Lest I be considered unduly critical and negative, let me hasten to say I think this is a great day for the church. Just because we are seeing changes, and just because things aren't like they used to be doesn't mean that we are seeing the beginning of the end. I suppose it's natural for a person about to begin his fourth decade with the same church to look back to "the good old days." However, I have a strong belief that good days are ahead. Jesus said, "upon this rock I will build my church," and that rock is still there. Structures may change; terminology may be different; meeting times may not stay at the traditional hours, but the church of Jesus Christ lives on, and "the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."



Revivals

In 1949 a young North Carolina preacher was thrust into national prominence because of great evangelistic services in Los Angeles. Soon the name Billy Graham was known all over the United States. Ministers in Greensboro invited Billy Graham to come to Greensboro for an evangelistic crusade. He accepted, and we began to make plans for a month-long crusade. There was no auditorium in Greensboro large enough to accommodate the anticipated crowds. The Crusade leadership got permission from the Building Commission to erect a large tabernacle with the understanding that it would be torn down after the crusade. Prayer meetings, counselor preparation meetings, choir rehearsals, and much administrative planning went on for months prior to the beginning of the crusade.

On October 14, 1952 Billy Graham and his

team, most of whom are still with him, opened the Crusade For Christ in Greensboro in the specially erected tabernacle which would seat approximately 10,000 persons. Greensboro had not experienced anything like this in a long, long time. Thousands came night after night. Hundreds of decisions were made. Before the month was over the weather had turned very cold, but the crowds continued to come. When it was announced that the Crusade would continue an additional week, the crowd burst into applause. The Holy Spirit continued to work, and the temporary tabernacle continued to be filled each evening. At the end of the fifth week, the Crusade was extended still another week.

On Sunday, December 9, 1951, I wrote the following article for the church newsletter:

Thank you,
BILLY GRAHAM

For Leading Us in a Great Revival Meeting!
You said many times while you were here that revivals did not come because of the efforts of one man, and we are in agreement with that statement. Because of the prayers and efforts of many, many people Greensboro experienced a religious awakening, but we want to thank you for coming here to lead us in this effort.

Our church has a new spirit. Prayer meeting attendance has more than doubled. More people came to church last Sun-

day morning than our auditorium could accommodate. The Sunday School broke its attendance record. Training Union attendance during the revival has been better than it has been in months. More people have pledged more money during this year's budget campaign than ever before. As a result of decisions at the tabernacle our church received 328 cards. The decisions were as follows:

Acceptance of Christ	-----111
Reaffirmation of Faith	----- 53
Assurance of Salvation	----- 50
Dedication	-----114

Since Sunday, October 14, the day the revival started, we have received into our church 103 persons. They were received as follows:

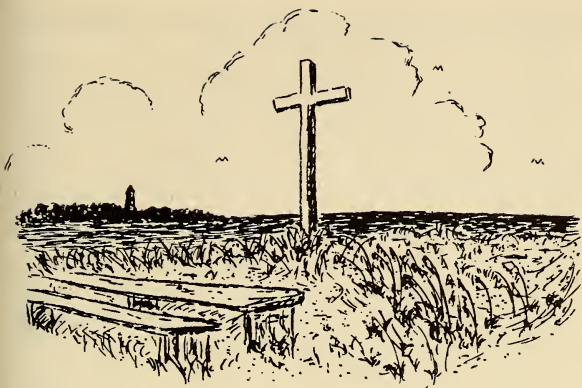
Baptism	----- 63
Letter	----- 38
Statement	----- 2

Some of the present leaders of our church made decisions in that great revival meeting. Twenty-eight years later you can still hear references to "the Billy Graham meeting," and anyone who was here at the time knows what the reference means.

Through the years we've had some very good revivals in First Baptist Church of Greensboro. It would not be my purpose to list them all. One of the outstanding ones was led by Dr. Baker James Cauthen. As you

would expect, there was a strong missions emphasis during the week. Dr. Cauthen poured out his heart in warm evangelistic preaching, and we had many decisions. To me it has always been inspiring to see a man as dedicated, as sincere, and as fervent as Baker James Cauthen. It just does me good to be around him.

Howard Butt led crusades in our city on two occasions. The first was a revival in our church, and two or three years later he came back to lead a city-wide revival which was held in the high school stadium. He was then the very young millionaire groceryman and had great appeal, especially to the young people.



Caswell

Taking groups down to Caswell in the summer has provided some of the happiest experiences we've had with the Greensboro church. For those of you who don't know what "Caswell" is, it is the North Carolina Baptist Assembly near Southport, N. C. The name Caswell comes from the fact that the Assembly now occupies the area of what was originally Fort Caswell. In fact, many of the buildings at the Assembly were once a part of the military installation. Construction of the fort was begun in 1826, and it was named for Richard Caswell, Revolutionary governor of North Carolina. The fort was used by the United States military forces intermittently through World War II. At the close of that War the grounds were no longer of use to the Navy, the most recent occupant of the area. Caswell was offered for sale, and the North

Carolina Baptist State Convention bought the fort to use as an assembly site.

There is a fascination about the old fort. Many of the old brick, earthen and concrete forts still remain. The grounds form a peninsula with marsh lands on one side, the Cape Fear River at the tip end, and the Atlantic Ocean on the other. The old residence buildings which face the mall have a certain majesty about them that defies description. You can stand there on that mall and imagine all sorts of things — Civil War soldiers parading, Spanish American War activities, World War I soldiers protecting the entrance to Wilmington, and Naval personnel loading supplies during World War II.

For about fifteen years Marjie and I took groups of young people to the Training Union Week at the Assembly. We had 86 in our largest group. Before the groups got so big we went to Caswell in an automobile caravan. Later we chartered a bus. We always had a planning meeting on Sunday evening about a week before leaving. I can still feel the excitement of those meetings.

One of the old residence buildings near the north end of the mall was "our place." We stayed in that building for many years. The girls and their counselors took over the upstairs, and the boys and men stayed in the first floor. I wish I could say that at the appropriate hour each evening every person in our group went to bed and went to sleep. Many nights at 1:00 A.M. I was still walking the halls of that building with my flashlight

"suggesting" to the boys that it was time to get to sleep. I could hear the girls' counselors upstairs doing the same thing. By the second or third night nearly every year I would say to myself, "This is the last year I'm going to bring groups down here. Someone else can do it next year." Gomer Lesch was one of the counselors for a number of years, and we both wondered at times if it were worth it.

The early evening fort services at Caswell were great. Assembled on top of one of the oldest forts, the group could look out over the Atlantic Ocean on one side and over the Cape Fear River on the other. Occasionally an ocean liner would come by during the service. Mrs. Owen Herring was the vesper service leader for many years. She had a way of challenging all of us to a greater effort to give our best to our Christian living. One year Marjie was the vesper leader, and we were all proud of her devotionals.

Jimmy Morgan was the State Training Union secretary during most of the years we went to Caswell. A finer person never worked for North Carolina Baptists. He had a tremendous sense of humor, but his interest in training young people and adults was his intense desire. In my own mind Jimmy Morgan will always be a part of Caswell. He died while we were still attending the Training Union weeks and was succeeded by Sam O'Neal. Sam did a great job, but Caswell was never quite the same without Jimmy.

The state Junior Memory Tournament was a big thing at Caswell. We always had several

Juniors in the state tournament. To qualify for this event boys and girls had to be declared winners in a church tournament, in an associational and a state regional tournament. To be a winner at Caswell there could be no mistakes. I'm sure one reason why these tournaments remain so vividly etched in my memory is that both of our daughters participated all four years of their Junior age. I can remember all the weeks and months of memorizing and practicing at home, and then the pre-tournaments. Fortunately, both of them became four-year winners. Tuesday afternoon of the assembly week was Junior Tournament time. Our boys and girls put on their "Sunday clothes" right after lunch. Tension began to build! Those of us who had children in the tournament had just about as much tension as the children. Not only was I concerned about my own child, I sometimes had over twenty others from our church participating. Occasionally one of our group would miss a verse or a reference and not be declared a winner. It was agony to sit in the audience and see a participant miss a verse that you knew he knew. A few tears would be shed, but a little while after the tournament was over the group would be headed for the beach!

The closing night of each of the Assembly weeks was a dedication service in the auditorium. Seeing some of our group make public decisions on that last night brought thrills and satisfactions far outweighing the feeling that bringing groups down there was not

worth the effort. After the service we would have our family group devotions on the front steps of our old Building 21. One after another almost everyone gave some kind of testimony as to what the week had meant to him or her. When we had the closing dedication prayer do you think I was feeling I was not coming back next year. No sir; I had already begun making plans for the group for the next summer!



Church Staff

Since the fall of 1949 when I joined the staff of First Baptist Church there have been approximately eighty people serving at different times on the staff, including those who now serve. I have worked with two pastors, five assistant pastors, four ministers of music, three organists, eleven youth directors, three directors of children's work, five ministers or directors of recreation, twenty-six secretaries, three church visitors, and two hostesses. In addition to these, there has been a large number of maintenance people and a large number of kindergarten teachers.

After Dr. Bowen retired in 1973, I became the senior minister in length of service. Although I had done a great deal of administrative work since first joining the staff, my title was changed in 1974 to minister of education/

administrator. As is true of most men in large churches who serve in this dual capacity, I found myself spending more time with administration than with education.

We have had some wonderfully fine men and women on our church staff. With the exception of two or three whose attitudes and conduct did not measure up to standards this church has set for its ministers and who did not act as if they had been called by God to serve Him, we've had some great staff members. I have been happy to have had association with them as fellow ministers and fellow staff members, and in addition to that, I feel that we are friends. Some of them are very close personal friends.

Dr. Bowen and I had a wonderful relationship at the Calvary Baptist Church in Jackson, Mississippi. I was only there for six months when I was drafted into the Army, but I cherished my association with him as pastor. When the call came from Greensboro, one of the factors weighing heavily in favor of coming here was the fact that he was pastor. We worked together for twenty-four years.

William G. (Bill) Wilson was our first assistant pastor. He came about the time we started the Lawndale church. When they constituted themselves into a self-supporting church they called Bill as pastor. He had a very fruitful ministry there for about ten years before moving to Nashville.

W. Randall Lolley followed Bill Wilson as assistant pastor. Randall was a very popular preacher and was loved by young and old.

He felt led to continue his theological education at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary and when an opportunity came to serve a church in Fort Worth as assistant pastor, he left our staff with the regrets of everyone. During the eighteen months he was here he and I became very close friends. For about thirty minutes almost every day we played ping-pong. I hate to say this about a man who has come into prominence in the Southern Baptist Convention, but I can still beat him playing ping-pong! One Sunday evening when he was preaching, our younger daughter, Joan, made her public profession of faith in Christ and joined the church. As an eight year old child she felt very close to him, and through the years he made some significant contributions to her life. After he received his doctor's degree from Southwestern he became pastor of the First Baptist Church of Winston-Salem, North Carolina. Joan attended Wake Forest University in Winston-Salem, and became a member of his church there. Later when she married, Randall assisted our present pastor, Dr. Alton McEachern, in the wedding ceremony and pronounced her and David Hughes husband and wife. We're glad that Randall is nearby as he serves as president of Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest, North Carolina.

Jack Causey, a native of Meridian, Mississippi, was our next assistant pastor. Jack was a graduate of Southern Seminary and was as likeable a person as you could find. He was a joy to work with and during his stay made a

real contribution to our church. He accepted a pastorate in Gaffney, South Carolina. He was followed by O'Neal Weeks who is now a professor at the University of Kentucky in Lexington, Kentucky. I remember O'Neal for many reasons, but at a time when our church was going through a significant crisis, he preached two sermons which I'll never forget. Who knows but that he "came to the kingdom" for such a time as that. He fearlessly, but lovingly, faced our congregation with some facts that needed to be faced. His leadership and friendship helped to bring us through some difficult times.

It's obvious that I can't write a paragraph about all eighty of the people I have worked with. It's dangerous to mention some names and not mention all, but please let me name a few. My omission of some with whom I have worked is not to imply any lesser degree of appreciation for them. The three "old timers" in the church office, who were here when I came, accepted a young minister of education and treated him with great respect. I shall never forget Ethel Lee, Marion Morton and Grace Maitland. I worked with Grace Maitland for eighteen years, Marion Morton sixteen years, and Ethel Lee thirteen years. God bless them all!

John Hancock, our building superintendent, has been with us for twenty-seven years. For many years he supervised the kitchen as well as the building and grounds. When we entered our new building in 1952 we were looking for a hostess to direct the work of the kitchen.

We had not found such a person, and almost without realizing what was happening we noticed that well-prepared food was coming from our kitchen, and it was being served efficiently. It was then that we discovered that John Hancock had been a mess sergeant in the Army! John has been a great friend and I have called on him many, many times.

We've had numerous youth directors including some very excellent ones. I mention only one because of a continuing relationship with our church. Clara Brincefield came to us in 1961. She had just graduated from Southwestern Seminary. It was her plan to serve a local church for two years and then go to the mission field. We knew that she was not going to stay with us longer than that, but we've always been grateful that we had her for that length of time. She is now serving in Temuco, Chile, and we feel that she is really "our missionary."

We have as fine a relationship with the ministers on our staff now as we've ever had. Doug Peoples, minister of music, is a great musician and a great Christian. Jack Heath, minister of children's work, works quietly and effectively with our kindergarten and children's program. Eleanor Patterson is effectively serving as minister of visitation. Charlotte Bell has recently joined our staff as director of the media center. Joe Ratliff came to First Baptist Church as minister of education/administrator when I was made associate pastor, and he has been a joy to work with. Vern Peterson will have been on the staff as

minister of youth and activities for just a very short time before the publication of this book, but I'm looking forward to working with him. A special thanks will always go to all the secretaries. We could not do our jobs without them.



Trips

Joe Burnette, minister of education of the First Baptist Church of Charlotte, and I have been good friends for a long time. Our paths have crossed in many places. We've taught study courses, led enlargement campaigns, attended conventions, and shared ideas at Ridgecrest. We were roommates during our month's stay in Hong Kong when we were there for the Asian Sunday School Campaign. Joe and his wife had been taking bus trips to various places in the country. They had been out to Glorieta, New Mexico, and in a conversation with him he urged me to take a group out there. I didn't know anything about taking a bus load of people half-way across the country, but he assured me that I could do it. I did do it and have been doing it ever since. Thanks, Joe, for the encouragement to do something which has brought us great joy

and satisfaction.

There are many people in our church who like to travel in groups. There is security in group travel which two or three women traveling alone might not have. Not having to drive and make travel plans appeals to men and women alike. Perhaps the most attractive thing about our bus trips has been the fellowship. We become a great big family group with all of the teasing, joking, and clowning that goes along with such a group. We have our serious times, too. We never start the day's trip without prayer. On Sundays we have special services on the bus as well as attending other churches on occasions.

Our first and longest trip was the one to Glorieta already mentioned. The itinerary was Montgomery, Alabama; New Orleans, La.; Houston, Texas; San Antonio, Texas; Carlsbad, New Mexico; Glorieta; Oklahoma City, Oklahoma; Little Rock Arkansas; and Memphis, Tennessee. When we got back to Greensboro we really felt like "brothers and sisters"—which really we were in our Christian relationship.

Since that first trip we've taken many such jaunts. Some of our passengers have become "regulars," but on every trip we have some people going on one of the tours for the first time. We've been to Charleston, Savannah, Nashville, Atlanta, through historic Virginia, Pennsylvania Dutch country, New Bern and Bath, Western North Carolina, and a great trip to Texas. Recently we took a group to Hawaii and we are planning a trip to Germany in

1980.

Marjie and I had never been to the Holy Land. We knew that many of our fellow-church members and friends were interested in going. Dr. McEachern and I formed the "MacRay Tour" group. I would work up the group and do the paper work and he would lecture while we were in Israel. Response was unbelievable! We announced the trip in a newsletter which came out on Friday. By Wednesday of the next week the trip was filled! This proved to be one of the greatest experiences Marjie and I have ever had.

No matter how much you have studied, no matter how many pictures you have looked at, no matter how many slides you have seen and how many reports of trips you have heard, you cannot really appreciate the Holy Land until you have been there. The Galilee area was our favorite place. Just being where you knew Jesus had been was significant, and being there with your pastor and some of your best friends made it doubly significant. Stopping in Rome, Athens, Corinth, Lucerne, and London made this a most memorable trip.



Denominational Service

Opportunities to serve the denomination have come from time to time. It was my privilege to help organize the first state-wide Baptist religious education association in Mississippi. That organization is now one of the strongest of the state organizations. I served as its first president. Since being in North Carolina I have served as president of the North Carolina Baptist Religious Education Association and the Eastern Baptist Religious Education Association which meets at Ridgecrest every summer. When the Southern Baptist Convention met in Miami Beach in 1960 I was elected president of the Southern Baptist Religious Education and presided at the meetings of that organization the following year when the convention met in St. Louis.

I have served on faculties at Ridgecrest,

the N. C. Baptist Assembly at Caswell, and at the Maryland and Mississippi summer assemblies. In the days when we were having study courses and enlargement campaigns I participated in many of those efforts in various churches and associations. One of the Convention-wide efforts in which I had a small part was the Sunday School campaign in the Los Angeles area in 1955. I greatly appreciated the privilege of being a part of the Asian Sunday School campaign in 1966. I worked specifically with two churches in Hong Kong and two churches in Okinawa.

In 1957 at the meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention in Chicago I was elected a trustee of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. This was an honor and a privilege which I greatly appreciated. Going back to serve as a trustee of an institution which had meant as much to me as Southwestern had was significant. As far as I was able to ascertain I was the first minister of education to serve in that capacity. Some graduates of the School of Religious Education of the Seminary had served as trustees, but at the time they served they were not ministers of education. Since my election there have been several ministers of education serving on the Seminary Board. After my ten-year tenure my good friend, Joe Burnette, succeeded me and served for ten years. When I concluded my term on the Board, one professor was left on the faculty who was on the faculty when I graduated in 1941, Dr. Jesse Northcutt. Two presidents served while I was a trustee, Dr.

J. Howard Williams and Dr. Robert E. Naylor.

Four years on the General Board of the Baptist State Convention in North Carolina provided an opportunity to serve N. C. Baptists. During the time I was on the Board, the organizational structure was changed and I served as the first chairman of the Church Programs Committee. A four-year term on the board of the Homes for the Aging was an interesting experience. During my last year on that board I served as president, and it was my privilege, along with Bill Poole, the executive director, to visit all of our homes in the state and to speak to the residents at devotional services. Appointments on various State Convention committees have provided opportunities to serve the Convention.

On May 7, 1979, Campbell College conferred upon me the honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity. This was a personal honor, of course, but I feel that in presenting me with this degree Campbell College (now Campbell University) was honoring First Baptist Church of Greensboro. At the risk of appearing to be egotistical I am including here the citation which was read as I was presented the degree. I'm proud of it, and I want to share it with members of First Baptist Church.

Campbell's choice of the Reverend S. C. Ray, Associate Pastor of the First Baptist Church of Greensboro, for the awarding of the Doctor of Divinity degree came about in this way.

In the field of religious education among the churches of the Southern Baptist Convention, S. C. Ray stands tall in wisdom, knowledge and experience. For years, he has demonstrated qualities of leadership and scholarship evidenced by his service on many denominational committees and his presidency of the Mississippi, North Carolina, Eastern and Southern Baptist Religious Education Associations. A Phi Beta Kappa graduate of the University of Texas and the holder of the Master of Religious Education degree from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Mr. Ray has served on several state assembly faculties and he has written for denominational publications.

From 1949 to 1976, Mr. Ray was the Minister of Education and Administrator of an outstanding church which contributes substantially to the Cooperative Program and indirectly to Campbell College's support. A constant reminder of the First Baptist Church of Greensboro on our campus is Turner Auditorium named in honor of a former pastor and warm friend of Campbell's founder.

A third cause for recognition is Campbell's quarter century involvement in Religious Education under the leadership of Dr. Perry Q. Langston. For the hundreds of Campbell graduates in this field, and for Baptists everywhere we take this occasion to give thanks to an outstanding practitioner.

In the name of Campbell's Trustees, Administration, and Faculty, I have the honor of conferring on S. C. Ray the degree of Doctor of Divinity. We extend to him this mark of appreciation and gratitude to a pioneer servant of the Lord whom he has served with much distinction.

Norman A. Wiggins
President



The Patriarch

Dr. J. Earl Mead was minister of education at the Cliff Temple Baptist Church in Dallas, Texas for thirty-six years. When I was much younger and newer in the field of religious education he was sometimes referred to as the "dean" of ministers of education. I always thought this was a compliment. Many years later at some kind of meeting I was referred to as the "dean" of North Carolina ministers of education. This was a kind of shock. I did not place myself in the "dean" category. Dr. Gaines Dobbins said when someone calls you the dean of something it simply means that you are the oldest one around.

A few years ago Marjie and I were at Ridgecrest for the meeting of the Eastern Religious Education Association. I went over to the registration desk to fill out my enrollment card. Marjie was standing across the hall waiting

for me. Two men who were standing near her (and I don't know who they were) were talking about various people they were seeing that they knew. One of them said, "There's old S. C. Ray. He's the patriarch of this group." If dean means the oldest, I don't know what patriarch means! I made the mistake of telling this story to Bob Sessoms, who was our minister of recreation at that time, and he never forgot it. If he came into my presence right now he'd refer to me as the patriarch.

On another occasion at Ridgecrest several of us ministers of education were standing in Pritchell Hall lobby talking. One asked the question, "Where are the old timers this year?" The answer immediately came, "We are the old timers."

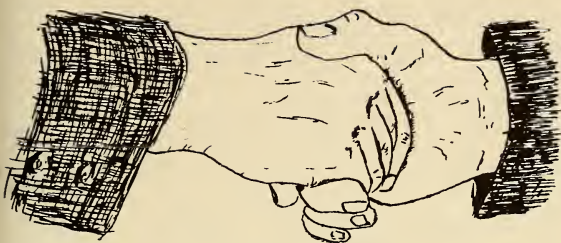
Religious education as a profession has come a long way since 1941. There just weren't many educational directors then. I served in two churches as their first educational director. It has been gratifying to see so many men and women enter the field and so many churches placing great emphasis upon good educational programs.

Preceding me here in Greensboro were O. E. Lee, Frank Stubbs, and C. S. Hodge. Mr. Lee was one of the pioneer educational directors in the Southern Baptist Convention. He graduated from Southwestern Seminary in 1921 and came directly to Greensboro. I did not know him personally, but he must have been a good man. I have never heard anything but good about him in the thirty years

I have been here. He served from 1921 until his death in 1941. He was the husband of the Ethel Lee I have previously talked about.

On our fifteenth anniversary with the church we were presented with a trip to the New York World's Fair. When we had been here seventeen years a group of friends had a surprise dinner for Marjie and me at the Greensboro Woman's Club and presented us a gift. The twentieth anniversary was observed with a gift of over \$2,000. A check for \$2,500 and a reception marked our 25th year.

I don't know how to say it any plainer — the greatest people in the world are members of First Baptist Church in Greensboro.



A New Pastor

There can never be but one pastor of a church, and the minister of education had better never forget that. It's tragic that so many pastors and ministers of education don't really "get along." Part of the blame for that condition lies with the minister of education who does not know how to relate himself to his role and to the role of the pastor. Part of the blame lies with pastors who don't know how to work with staff members. When the pastor leaves a church the minister of education who remains on the staff is in a timorous position. Much of the effectiveness of his work depends upon his relationship with his pastor. The new pastor may not want him to stay. He may not want to stay. In 1973 Dr. Bowen announced his retirement. I knew I was going to be faced with changing pastors. I had never faced this before. In my other two churches I was the

one who had left. Now I was being left!

A sixteen-person pulpit committee was elected by the church. William Westphal was elected chairman. After a period of orientation they began to travel to various parts of the country hearing prospective pastors. Weeks and months went by with an occasional report from the committee that they were at work. We prayed earnestly that God would lead the committee to the right man. I prayed earnestly that God would lead the committee to the man with whom I might have a good relationship.

This pulpit committee took a vow of secrecy. No one knew where they were going, whom they were listening to, and what their reaction was. In mid-fall of 1973 Mr. Westphal reported that they were going to present a prospective pastor on a certain Sunday. Surely, I thought, they will talk to me about their recommendation before they present him to the church. After all, I've been here in a close working relationship with the pastor of this church for twenty-four years. The days went by and Saturday before the Sunday of the presentation came and still I did not have any idea who the man was. I almost let myself get a little bitter, but I decided that would be of no benefit to anyone, most of all not to myself.

That Sunday morning I was talking with Pat Chandler, the financial secretary, about the prospective pastor. She didn't know any more about who it was than I did, but she did know that a member of the committee had had

a long conversation with Dr. John McClanahan in Pine Bluff, Arkansas, a couple of days before. So she and I decided that Dr. McClanahan was the new pastor! In the morning service Mr. Westphal, in his usual dramatic manner, presented the report of the committee and came to the point where he said, "And now I present to the congregation Dr . . . " I said under my breath, "John McClanahan," but Bill Westphal continued, "Alton H. McEachern of the St. Matthews Baptist Church of Louisville, Kentucky.

Dr. McEachern was a young man in his early forties. I was a patriarch. What was going to be my relationship with him? Could a minister of education who had been in the same church for twenty-four years adjust to a new, young pastor? Would he want me to adjust? He had told the pulpit committee that he wanted the staff to stay, but you never know what the relationship is going to be until you have worked in it for a while.

My first contact with the new pastor was when I shook hands with him at the close of that service. I liked him from the beginning! I went home feeling that my prayer had been answered. I went home feeling that he and I would work together as Christian brothers. The next morning Dr. McEachern met with the entire staff, and after that meeting I still liked him. Two weeks later the church officially called him as pastor, and his plan was to begin work on January 1, 1974.

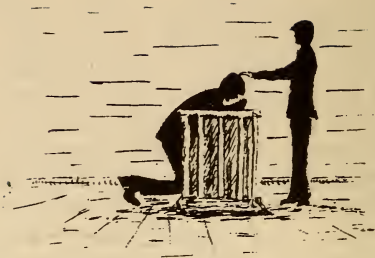
I could wish that every minister of education who changes pastors would have the same

experience I have had with Dr. McEachern. We have had a wonderful relationship. He calls me "partner," and I like that. His youthfulness and creativeness have given me new life. I think, because of my experiences here and my knowledge of the membership, that I have been able to help him. He's not only my pastor; he's not only my working supervisor; he's my friend.

With the coming of Dr. McEachern as pastor many of us had very high hopes that our church would reverse some of the downward trends in attendance, baptisms, and additions. We had been following the pattern of so many Southern Baptist churches of the time. It's also true that at the close of many long pastorates some people begin to think that they will wait and see what the new pastor is like before they join and become active. Dr. McEachern was young and attractive. He was vivacious and had new ideas. He was a great preacher. Surely, now that he's here we'll begin to move forward immediately.

But it didn't work that way! I think we leaned too heavily on the fact that we had a new pastor. We didn't visit because the new pastor would attract people to our church. We didn't work as hard on the financial campaigns because we had a new pastor. We didn't keep our educational program going as strong as we should have, because our new pastor was here! Now I'm not taking one ounce of credit from our new pastor, but we all knew that what we were doing was wrong! The efforts of one man, pastor or otherwise, cannot suc-

cessfully keep a church of 3,700 members moving like it should move. We dipped embarrassingly low one year in baptisms. For those of you who don't know how many there were that year, I'm not going to tell you. If you ever knew, I hope you have forgotten. When we realized that it was going to take all of us working together to make old First Baptist Church move, we began to see a difference. This was a hard way for us to learn a lesson, but I'm grateful to God that we learned it, and that we did something about it.



Changing Roles

Early in 1976 the associate pastor who had been serving the church resigned and left the staff. We went for some months without an associate. All of the ministers on the staff shared some of the pastoral load. Dr. McEachern began to talk to me about the possibility of becoming associate pastor. My first reactions were negative. This would mean that someone else would be brought in to do "my" job. I could think of all kinds of reasons why I didn't want to change roles. I not only thought of the reasons; I wrote them down. My "call" way back there in 1935 at the Palacios Assembly was to religious education. My training was in that field. My experience was in education. I had achieved a certain amount of success in the area. I had received some honors, state and convention-wide, because of my efforts in religious education. I

had grown gradually into the administration role at the church and felt that it was being done acceptably. I liked what I was doing!

To be fair, I wrote down some reasons why I should make the change. Twenty-seven years of doing the same thing over and over from year to year was a long time. Twenty-seven Vacation Bible Schools, twenty-seven years of enlisting workers, etc. Maybe I did need a change — and maybe the church needed a change from me. You begin to take things for granted after a time, and people know fairly well what you are going to do and say in a particular situation. My knowledge of the membership, developed because of my long tenure, would be of benefit to the pastor in helping with the pastoral duties.

You can write out all the lists you want to, and the pros and cons can be considered, but in this kind of work the final consideration is how the Lord leads. Marjie and I prayed, and I know the pastor prayed. After several weeks of deliberation and prayer we felt the Lord was leading in the direction of the associate pastorate. After a very gracious recommendation by the pastor to the personnel committee, my name was presented to the church and I was called to be associate pastor. Many kind remarks by members of the congregation confirmed our decision. Some said, "The only thing wrong with this is that it should have been done a long time ago." But "a long time ago" would have been wrong. I think the Lord led me to this very time for this very place of service.

I have already discussed my attitude toward ordination. I had not felt that I needed to be ordained. Many of my fellow ministers of education had followed that route, and I had no objection to that; but I just didn't feel that I needed to be ordained to do my work here. Now that my role was changed to associate pastor, ordination was in order. I could see where it would be helpful — even necessary. Dr. McEachern asked me if I had any preferences for participants in the ordination service. I told him I wanted him to preach the ordination sermon, and if he could come, I'd like to have Randall Lolley participate. Randall had the evening free, and he came and delivered the charge to the candidate, and I'll always be grateful for his coming. My ordination was a very significant and meaningful occasion. There's no way to describe the reverence of the "laying on of hands." Susan and Ralph came over from Chapel Hill, and as a surprise to me Joan and David came down from Princeton for the service.

Being associate pastor has been an interesting and challenging change of pace. I stay just as busy, but the tremendous pressure of a large educational program and all the administrative details no longer bear down on me seven days and night of each week. I have always done a certain amount of pastoral work, and what I'm doing is no great change, but knowing that I have more time for "people ministries" is gratifying.

I was very jealous of some things I had done through the years. I liked editing and writing

most of the weekly newsletter. This was something I really enjoyed. I didn't relish giving that responsibility to someone else. I enjoyed the administrative work of the office. I did a lot of things that I thought no one else could do. I found out differently! I have been amazed at how smoothly all my old work has gone along. Joe Ratliff, with all his administrative experience in the Air Force, is a natural for the job. It wasn't long until I was walking right by something I had been doing for twenty-seven years and saying, "That's Joe's job."

One of the advantages of having a long term minister on the staff is that it helps preserve a continuity for many members and ex-members. People who were formerly members here come back and see a familiar face on the platform. It helps them feel that they still belong and that there is someone here who knows and remembers them. Please don't think I'm trying to say that I remember everyone who has gone out from our church in these thirty years — that would be impossible — but I do remember many of them. Also, many older members like to feel that there is someone who knew them when they were active and occupied positions of leadership.

There are those who ask, "How can you be satisfied to be the number two man on the staff all the time?" To be a successful minister of education or associate pastor you have to make peace with the fact that you are not "number one" on the staff. However, doing what the Lord calls you to do is far more im-

portant than your numerical position on the staff totem pole. I've never felt called to be pastor of a church. I do not have that ambition. I do not feel that my pastor is holding a position I would like to have. I have a firm conviction that there is a place for a multiple ministry, and the Lord didn't call me to be pastor. After I became associate pastor my role more closely paralleled that of the pastor than it had as minister of education. There are many times when I am "helping" him. There are times when I'm doing things that he did not have time to do, but that doesn't bother me. When he writes a book, I feel as though I have had a part in it because I have been able to help with some of his responsibilities. When he teaches for a month at a seminary I feel that I have made some contribution to that effort by assuming some responsibilities while he is gone.



Marjie and the Girls

One Sunday night in 1973 I had attended a committee meeting of some kind after church. When I arrived at home Marjie and Susan and Ralph Smialowicz were sitting on the side porch. Susan and Ralph had been dating for several months. As usual, on Sunday evening after church, I was hungry and suggested that we go to the kitchen for a snack. Ralph said that he had something that he and Susan wanted to talk to us about before we retired from the porch. Marjie and I were not entirely surprised about what the topic of discussion was, because we knew that two young people seeing each other as much as they had been doing probably had talked about marriage. One of my first statements to them was, "I hope that you will be as happy in your marriage as Marjie and I have been." Susan said to Ralph, "I told you that's

what he'd say." I value that statement of hers and consider it a very fine compliment.

I'm thankful for many things in my life: Christian parents, good health, wonderful opportunities for study and work, my own Christian experience, and standing large among the things for which I am grateful is my dedicated, understanding, loving wife and mother of our children. When I met that young seminary student back there in old Fort Worth Hall in 1940, little did I realize how much she was going to mean to me. I was really sincere when I told Susan and Ralph that we had been happy. I couldn't wish anything better than what we've experienced for any young couple about to be married.

We had a beautiful wedding in the chapel at the Garden City Army Air Field, Garden City, Kansas January 28, 1944. Marjie's sister, Ann, was the only one of our families present. I introduced her to a young pilot, and six weeks later they were married! We did our best to persuade them not be so hasty with their marriage plans, but our persuasion was to no avail. However, be it said to their credit, they have maintained a wonderful Christian home through the years and have three fine children all happily married. Thirty-three years after our marriage in Garden City, Marjie and I and Ann and Smitty all went back for a visit. It was the first time any of us had been back since being transferred from there by the Army.

When we were married I was commanding officer of the medical detachment at the base

hospital. Most of the enlisted men who served under me were present at the wedding. After the service we got into a car in front of the chapel and one of the men opened the door and said, "I may not have another opportunity like this," and threw a handful of rice in my face!

A great deal of the effectiveness of a minister's work depends upon his wife. I say without hesitation that what I have been able to accomplish through the years as a minister of education and as an associate pastor has been greatly influenced by my wife. Marjie had received a call from God and had prepared herself to serve and did serve for a while as a member of the staff of the Broadway Baptist Church in Knoxville, Tennessee. I'm glad that she felt that she could continue to be in God's will as the wife of a minister as well as on a church staff. She has been understanding when long hours at the church interfered with family plans. She has been helpful in countless hours of discussions concerning church programs. In fact, many would be surprised to know how many of the minister of education's plans and ideas were really hers!

Susan was born in Fort Worth just a few weeks before I was discharged from the Army. Joan arrived five years later after we had been in Greensboro about two years. Our girls have been a joy. Although my schedule through the years has been heavy and many evenings and entire weekends were filled with church activities, we managed to spend

time with the girls. Picnics in the yard and at parks, short trips, Saturday night pancake suppers, special times at Christmas, school activities, Caswell and Ridgecrest all are now fond memories. We enjoyed some wonderful long trips together. It would be impossible to mention everyone who befriended our family through the years, but the mention of a long trip brings to mind one kindness which had a lasting impact. There are times in the life of a minister when things get heavy, the body gets tired, and the spirit begins to drag. He probably never knew just how welcome his offer was, but at just such a point in my life, our good friend Ed Gregg asked me what we were going to do for a vacation. I told him we hadn't made any plans. He said, "Determine what you want to do and what it will cost and I'll take care of it." After a trip to Monterey, Mexico, with interesting stops going and coming, we came back refreshed and ready for work again.

Christian parents are always concerned about their own children's conversion experience. Because of teaching at home and the influence of Sunday School teachers and Training Union leaders, both of our girls made professions of faith at an early age. Going to church and participating in church activities was a way of life for our children. I know there were times when they got "sick" of all the meetings, but they were understanding and genuinely interested in most of what we were doing.

Susan went to Meredith College in Raleigh.

When she graduated she became a social worker at the N. C. Baptist Children's Home in Thomasville. Later she went to Chapel Hill and got her master's degree in social work. She then served as juvenile court counselor in Burlington, and when she and Ralph were married she was serving as acting chief counselor. Ralph Smialowicz received his PhD degree at Chapel Hill and accepted a position as a research scientist with the Environmental Protection Agency with his laboratory in the Research Triangle Park. Commuting to Burlington from Chapel Hill became somewhat tedious so Susan accepted a position with the N. C. Memorial Hospital in Chapel Hill as a social worker. They bought a home in Chapel Hill, and as most people do who live there, think it's a great place to be.

Joan went to Wake Forest University in Winston-Salem. Although Wake Forest is just 28 miles from Greensboro she might as well have been in a far state. She was too busy with campus activities to come home often, and we were happy that she was so interested in campus life. In January of her senior year she spent a mini-term at Ridgecrest with a group of students studying contemporary religious thought. In the group was a young man named David Hughes, and from that association grew a relationship which was to be significant for both of them. Joan graduated in May of 1973 and accepted a teaching position in Atlanta. Toward the end of her year there she and David called us and told us of their plans to be married.

Joan and David's wedding was an interesting experience. President Nixon resigned on August 9, 1974. The wedding was scheduled for August 17, 1974. So what? What does the resignation of a President of the United States have to do with our daughter's wedding? Nixon's resignation itself really had nothing to do with wedding plans, but Gerald Ford became president, and Gerald Ford's son and daughter-in-law were going to be in the wedding. Joan and David had been in their wedding in July while Mr. Ford was vice-president. Naturally, there was a great deal of interest in anything members of the presidential family did at that time. The presence of reporters and secret service men at the wedding and at the pre- and post-wedding activities was interesting! As is customary, we sent wedding invitations to the parents of the young people who were to be in the wedding. Of course, Mr. and Mrs. Ford couldn't come, but we have a personal letter from him written just two days before he became president of the United States saying that the pressure of his schedule would not allow him and Mrs. Ford to attend.

David Hughes, our new son-in-law, chose to attend Princeton Theological Seminary. After a brief honeymoon trip, we waved goodbye to them as they left Greensboro in Joan's Pinto and in a U-Haul truck to go to Princeton. Joan taught school in Titusville, New Jersey, while David attended seminary classes. Three years later they returned to Greensboro for a brief time until David was called

as associate pastor of the Woodbrook Baptist Church of Baltimore, Maryland. I felt honored that he asked me to preach his ordination sermon. They have moved into a home which they bought in Baltimore, and since being there Joan has earned her Master's Degree from Johns Hopkins University—summa cum laude!

Now Marjie and I are alone again! Some of our friends are depressed because all of their children have left home. We're happy! It's not that we love our children any less, but we've seen them receive their college degrees, become married to fine Christian men . . . "and for this cause shall children leave father and mother and become attached to their chosen mates." And in addition to that, Marjie and I just like being together. We don't have any family schedule to work around. We don't have any college bills coming in twice a year. We don't feel the daily responsibility of children and their activities. We know that they are happy. And all of that makes for some wonderful times.

At Joan's wedding rehearsal dinner in a toast I was giving I mentioned that we had never had any boys but now that Susan was married and Joan was getting married the next day we would have girls and boys in our family. I said, "Now our family is complete." When I said that Randall Lolley quipped, "Ski, haven't you ever heard of grandchildren?" Well, 1979 is the year of grandchildren for us. On May 17, Amy Burgess Smialowicz arrived, and we were elated at the birth of our first

grandchild. On August 21, Timothy Ryan Hughes made his appearance, and we continued to rejoice in the happiness that comes to grandparents. We are looking forward to many happy times with these little ones.

Harold Pritchard and Bill Norris both gave me a "Grandpa Bragging Permit" which read: This certifies that S. C. Ray shall have the right to talk of his Grandchildren at length at gatherings of one or more persons. When interrupted he shall have the authority to shush those guilty. If more than one Grandfather is present, Juniority shall prevail—the newest to talk first. Pictures may be passed around at will by holders of this Permit. The cards were signed by Harold and Bill over the title "Grand Bragger."



Special Ministries

In addition to the regular teaching and training programs, we have through the years participated in some very interesting and challenging special ministries. One of these has been with what the public schools call special education. Approximately twenty years ago two or three young mothers with children who had cerebral palsy and who wanted to attend Sunday School, asked if we could provide some teaching program for their children on Sunday morning during the teaching hour. One of the administrators in the Greensboro Public School system was a member of our church, and with his help and with the help of Mrs. Irene Hill, also a public school teacher, we started a class on Sunday mornings primarily for children in wheel chairs who were limited because of cerebral palsy.

We called this class "The Special Class," and it provided the ministry we had hoped for. As time went by and new members were added to the class, some were not handicapped by cerebral palsy but were mentally handicapped. Most of these at the time of enrollment were very young. After the passage of several years we discovered that the class was mainly ministering to these mentally handicapped children, if indeed they were children. We had a class of teenagers with the problems of teenagers as well as their special problem. And at the time of the writing of these words, most of these teenagers are now chronologically adults.

A dedicated group of men and women have led in this work for years. Bible teaching, applications to the Christian life, music, and recreation have combined to provide for this special group a needed ministry. Every year a group of the class members, their parents, and their workers attend the N. C. Baptist state sponsored Happiness Retreat, either at Caswell or at Caraway. They have changed the name of the class from The Special Class to The Happy Hearts Class, and I think the change was good!

For many years we have had a ministry with the deaf. One of our young men, Gerald Small, became interested in helping deaf people study the Bible. He was not the only person involved in this ministry, and I can't mention all their names, but largely through his influence a permanent class was organized for the deaf. Gerald died a short time after the

organization and the class was named for him. It still carries his name. Jerry Potter, missionary to the deaf for the Baptist State Convention, has been a vital part of our deaf ministry through the years. He comes at least once a month on Wednesday evenings for Bible study and has been here many times for special programs. Our morning worship services are translated for the deaf members. In addition to the Gerald Small Class we now have a class for deaf children which, incidentally, is taught by Gerald's daughter, Glenda. I have some very fine friends in the deaf class, and I regret that years ago I didn't learn the sign language so that I could converse with them.

For a while we had a Sunday School class ministry in several fire stations on Sunday morning. I'm sorry we do not still have this ministry. It's one of those programs that flourished for a while, and for lack of leadership came to a halt.

A ministry that has been maintained through the years is the teaching program in three rest or nursing homes. Once a week volunteers from our teaching program go to the homes and either teach a Sunday School lesson or present a program of Christian music and devotional thought. There is usually a combined attendance of about seventy-five in the three groups. For over ten years I went to The Evergreens once a month to teach the lesson. Almost all of the attendants in the class were in wheel chairs. Most of them were very appreciative, and they would express their thanks every time I went for the lesson peri-

od. Over a period of time you could begin to feel very close to those who attended regularly.

On one occasion I had been asked to give the devotional at the Greensboro Health Center. Nina Wiglesworth, educational secretary at the church, went along to lead the singing and to sing a solo. She did a superb job of the solo. I could tell that the guests there that day had responded to her singing. I said to them before I started my devotional, "I expect that you would rather hear Mrs. Wiglesworth sing than hear me talk." One of the ladies in the back called out, "That just might be!" On another day there in that same facility Nina and Pat Chandler had gone along to lead the music and to sing a duet. The selection was "Ivory Palaces," and the tempo of their singing and of the pianist was not exactly the same. Nina and Pat got tickled like two teenage girls and had to stop singing. After a second start they finished the selection. That song will never be the same for me.

One of the very fine specialized programs has been the nursery school and kindergarten. This is one of our oldest special ministries. Our first kindergarten opened in the old church on the corner of West Market and Eugene Streets. In just two months we entered our new building, and the kindergarten had new facilities as all of our programs did. In the summer of 1952 Dorothy Cox, a recent graduate of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, joined our staff as director of children's work. She organized our first kinder-

garten and served as teacher-director for a number of years until her marriage to Bill Boldman. Her assistant for that very first kindergarten class in 1952 was Mrs. Chris Williams. Mrs. Williams is still teaching in our kindergarten program, and has been a lead teacher for many years. For ten years Jack Heath has served as the able director of this program, as well as for all our children's programs. For at least twenty years I have gone to the kindergarten classes before Christmas and have taken individual pictures of all the children for them to give to their parents for Christmas.

In the fifties and sixties it became popular for churches to build recreational buildings. We built such a facility in 1963. It contained a gymnasium, bowling lanes, game rooms, snack counter, and craft areas. There were some who felt that this facility would be a tremendous attraction for young people and newcomers to our city. We have found that it has not been a great outreach arm of the church, but if you recognize it as a service facility to provide recreational opportunities for the people you have, then I think it has been of value. The key to any recreation program is not the facility itself, but the leadership directing the program. One of the most used parts of the building has been the ceramics area.

We have a church library second to none. The religious reference section is as fine as you can find in some colleges. A beautiful children's library provides a large number of

volumes for the young. But let me revert now to the role of "old timer." Since the growth of television; children are not reading as much as they used to. When my children were young, getting some books from the library was as much a part of going to church on Sunday as going to Sunday School. Many of our children now don't know where the children's library is.

In March of 1959, First Baptist Church of Greensboro was one hundred years old. The week of March 9-14 was observed as Anniversary Week. Dr. J. Clyde Turner, pastor of the church from 1910 to 1948 and who at that time lived in Raleigh, was invited to preach on Sunday. His Sunday morning sermon was "Hitherto Hath the Lord Helped Us," and the evening subject was "The Way Ahead." The only other living ex-pastor of the church, Dr. W. C. Newton, was present for the day's activities and led in prayer at the evening service. Dr. Newton was pastor in 1901 and 1902. He left Greensboro for missionary service in China. For many years the Greensboro church provided some of his financial support on the mission field.

After the evening worship service a pastor's reception was held honoring Dr. Newton, Dr. Turner and Dr. Bowen.

For the one-hundredth anniversary Dr. Turner wrote a history of the church which he entitled **A Century of Service**. Using the material in this book, it was my privilege to write a pageant depicting one hundred years' history of the church. The pageant, "Upon

This Rock," was presented on Thursday and Friday evenings of anniversary week. Gomer Lesch, now a special assistant to Dr. Grady Cothen, president of the Baptist Sunday School Board, was then a member of our church, and he very ably directed the production. Music for the pageant was directed by E. L. Williams, minister of music of the church at that time.

A mistaken idea that many people have about a large church with a large staff is that problems are at a minimum. I've heard pastors of very small churches talking about their problems, and then with a bit of envy in their attitudes they say to a person on a large church staff, "But, of course, you don't have to face anything like that." There are some problems that are common to churches of all sizes. There are some problems that a small church might have that a large church would not experience, and then the large church faces many, many problems that arise simply from size.

All problems are not solved by the number of persons on the church staff. Sometimes the number of persons on the staff can be the problem. A staff of Christian brothers and sisters working together as a team can be effective and productive. On the other hand, a group of Christian brothers and sisters just working on a church staff without being a real team may have a good time and may give the impression of "doing the job" but may be spending much time in duplication of duties and confusion in communication. An at-

titude of "I'll do my job; don't bother me with anything else" will eventually cause trouble.

Many of the challenges and problems faced by a church administrator are "people problems." Patience, understanding, and a genuine love for people are characteristics needed by a church administrator. In fact, these same characteristics are needed by all church staff members.

We have faced many of the same challenges that all churches have faced. We had some limitations of funds. We had some inadequate equipment. There were times when we were using obsolete procedures and obsolete equipment in the office. There were times when duties of staff members were not clearly defined. For a number of years I felt we needed a personnel manual, and because I was administrator I felt that I was the one to write the manual. But this was something that could be delayed when the schedule got tight. Year after year went by without a manual. Charles Robinson, who was in the personnel department of a local insurance company, was chairman of the personnel committee of the church. In discussions with him we learned that he had done this kind of thing many times in his work. We agreed that he would write a personnel manual for the church. He did write such a manual, and it was far better than anything I could have produced. This was just another example of how we staff ministers don't depend upon the expertise and ability of our church members nearly enough. The manual has proved its value

many, many times since its publication.

While in the process of producing the personnel manual an attempt was made to determine the difference between what each employee thought he was doing and what the supervisor thought that employee was doing. The chairman of the personnel committee asked each employee to write out a description of his duties. One of the maintenance men turned in the following description:

“To clean sanctuary which get all messed up from people moving the pulpit furniture and putting risers and tables in it scratching up the floor from dragging them over the floor. This I have to make ready for use the next Sunday. This duty is done every day if need be, as a matter of fact all these jobs are done daily. The bath room cleaning. If this wasn't done then the church wouldn't be worth coming to, have you ever smelled a dirty bath room? Work on Sunday trying to make it comfortable for the member like having their coffee ready for them to drink when they get there open the doors close it up in the A.M. and open it up in the P. M. then turn out all the lights and lock it up Sunday nite. I thought you knew all this. If there is meeting Sunday then I have to stay until it's over. Put tables up for ceramics then take them down and make class rooms ready for Sunday School class. You name it we do it. Wash dishes, carry the trash out of the kitchen help with the meals in

the kitchen, after the meal we clean off the tables take them down and sit dining room up for Sunday clean the halls, clean the nurserys. clean up after wedding. I could name some more."



Looking Ahead

Not long ago I was at the North Carolina Baptist Assembly at Southport on some Baptist State Convention committee business, and while there I had an opportunity to talk to Dr. J. Earl Mead who was leading the devotionals for the summer staff. I have already mentioned Dr. Mead's name earlier in these reminiscences. He was, before his retirement, minister of education of the Cliff Temple Baptist Church in Dallas, Texas, for thirty-six years. I have always admired Earl Mead. I like to hear him give devotional talks. In our conversation recently he asked me how long I had been at Greensboro. At that time it was twenty-nine years, and that was what I told him. He looked at me with that warm smile of his and said, "I think you are going to stay."

I hope when I come to the end of my ministry in Greensboro the best thing that can be

said of me won't be "He really stayed there a long time." My very good friend and advisor, Judge William M. York, believed that time was one of man's most valuable possessions. I've heard him talk many times about how much time is wasted. If I could have used my time as effectively as he did I would have no worry about what people might say. I'm proud of my thirty-year tenure. I look back with many happy memories. I can see things about which I am happy; I can see things which I'd like to forget. I wish I could name every person who has had any part in contributing to my ministry here. Friendships are precious possessions.

And now just a word to the members of First Baptist Church of Greensboro: This little book of thoughts doesn't constitute my resignation or retirement. I still have some time before the normal age of retirement, and when that time comes I hope to be right here!

The following is a paper prepared for a seminar session at a national meeting of religious educators in Houston, Texas.

A CODE OF CONDUCT FOR A CHRISTIAN EDUCATOR

In a day when moral and ethical defection of public figures has become commonplace, and each day's news brings stories of others who have lowered their standards below what is ordinarily considered acceptable by the public, it becomes increasingly more important for those in public positions with the term "Christian" attached to their title to examine carefully their personal code of conduct. There is something sad about an elected official being convicted of crimes, misdemeanors, and misbehavior. There is something even sadder about a minister or one specifically known as a Christian leader falling into such a situation. Many times a minister or Christian educator's effectiveness is ruined even with a suspicion of misconduct — whether ever proved in a court of law or not.

There are certain basic moral standards which should be expected of any educator whether designated "Christian" or not. Honesty, integrity, fair dealing, reliability, open mindedness — even concern for the well being of others. But for the Christian educator there are additional dimensions. My concern for those whom I teach grows deeper when I realize God loves them and cares for them. My relationship to them changes where there

is a desire on my part to win them to Christ. When education is viewed in the light of a desire to advance the cause of Christ and His church it takes on a different perspective. Moral standards have been there all the time, but Christian concern and compassion give the Christian educator something others don't have.

It is my opinion that the acceptance of God's "call" carries with it certain obligations to live up to high moral standards. A Christian educator's morals should be above reproach. In addition to morals, there are certain standards of conduct about which we must concern ourselves. When I was a seminary student I heard Dr. W. L. Howse say that ministers of education and church employees should be concerned about what people think of their conduct, but they would never be able to please every "crackpot" in the congregation. An educator's morals could conceivably be so high that no one could possibly criticize them, yet he could receive untold criticism for certain acts of conduct which in the eyes of some would be questionable. It is not advisable for church employees to strap themselves to petty, Pharisaical rules of conduct just because some may condone such, but it is advisable to be cognizant of and concerned about what is and what is not acceptable conduct in a particular situation. What is completely acceptable in one community might not be acceptable at all in another. Why invite criticism by engaging in activities or dress patterns that you know will not be acceptable.

We have ample criticism that comes unconsciously and unexpectedly, so why ask for more? This will mean that on occasions we will be doing things with which we do not agree, but if no principle is involved, this is far better than "causing talk." Don't think that I am advocating the stifling of personality to the point of frustration. There are many ways in which Christian educators can "do their thing," and be themselves. I admire a person who dares to be different when that difference doesn't affect his ministry adversely.

My opinion of myself will have a great deal to do with my relationship to other people. Knowing that God called me into a specific ministry, feeling that He helped me prepare myself for my work, and having a conviction that I am serving where God wants me to serve helps me to have confidence and assurance that I can do my job. If I do not believe what I'm doing is important, it is not likely that others will. In groups of ministers of education where self introductions are being made, almost always someone will introduce himself as "the general flunkey" or "the chief cook and bottle washer," of such and such a church. If that's what he thinks about his job, then that's what many others will think. I like to feel that I am a God-called, professionally trained, minister in God's service, and I can confidently feel this without arrogance or self righteousness.

Relationship to Church Members

"What should be my relationship to church members?" This is a question often asked by Christian educators. Shall I fraternize with them? Shall I try to assume a "ministerial role" when I am around them? Can I entertain friends in my home? Can I have close personal friends? Should my wife and children feel restricted in their relationship to church members? If I were to try to give a simple answer to these questions I would say, "Be yourself." Any person who thinks reasonably will know that all people have friends with whom they have a much closer relationship than others. A person's life would be devoid of many pleasures if he did not have some "best friends." Through the years I have had many close friends with whom I have had many associations, both in my home and in theirs. I do not feel that these associations have affected my relationship to others in the congregation. One does need to be concerned that his circle of friends does not become exclusive. A friendly, warm relationship should exist between the educator and all the members in so far as possible. There will be strained relationships because of stands taken, programs initiated, etc., but even in the face of such relationships there can be a feeling of brotherly love and concern. A characteristic we greatly need is to learn to disagree without being disagreeable. I don't think a

minister of education should allow himself to be "pushed around" but he can be firm in beliefs and positions without being obnoxious. Respect the opinions and beliefs of others and expect them to respect yours.

Relationship to the Pastor

It is tragic that there is strife between so many pastors and ministers of education. Some of this is due to the lack of definitive roles. Some of it is the result of the minister of education's unwillingness to recognize the pastor's leadership. Some pastors do not allow ministers of education to be ministers. Jealousy on the part of either, or both, can mar a good relationship. There can only be one pastor, and the minister of education who has been called to be a minister of education will recognize and accept this fact willingly. If every time the pastor stands to preach the minister of education wishes he were there, frustration and dissatisfaction will inevitably come. If, in addition to respect as leader, there can be genuine love and admiration for the pastor, there is the making of a happy relationship. The congregation must feel that I am supporting the pastor. If I must disagree, and disagreement is natural, it should be done in private and not before church members. Happy are the pastor and educator who can sit down and talk through and pray through their differences.

I know many will not agree with me now, but I have not ever been comfortable calling

my pastor by his first name. I have only worked with four pastors, three of whom were older and more experienced than I; and calling them "Dr." or "Pastor" was quite natural. Recently my pastor has become a man much younger than I am, and calling him "Dr." or "Pastor" comes just as naturally. I like it that way.

Relationship to the Staff

Most ministers of education will have a "ministerial" relationship with other staff ministers such as associate pastor, minister of music, etc., and then there will be a relationship with other staff members who serve under their supervision. Between ministers on a church staff there will be much give and take. There can be a wonderful relationship if all respect each other and if all are going in the same direction. Many educators serve as administrators. Some are respected as leaders and are effective administrators, and some are not. The educator who supervises others must be willing to assume his leadership. The "leader" who won't "lead" creates frustration on the part of those looking for direction. He must be fair in his dealings. He must be honest. He must not expect more than he himself is willing to produce. He cannot demand respect and response simply by saying "I will be respected," but by what he is and what he does. Again I know that there will be disagreement here, but I have found

that it makes for a better working relationship if the secretaries call me " Mr." than by my first name. There are situations, I am sure, where the opposite would be true, but it has worked for me. A man in the position of minister of education can't be too careful about his relationship to female staff members. There are those around who are just waiting for something to "talk" about, so why place yourself in any compromising positions, as innocent as they may be?

Relationship to Family

We are too familiar with the families of pastors and church staff members being neglected as the husband and father spends all his time working with other families. Helping families and individuals and being dedicated to our jobs is a part of what we have been called to do, but complete neglect of one's own wife and children is not expected of any minister, be he pastor or minister of education. There are those ministers who "work with people" all the time and when they go home feel that they can be demanding, inconsiderate, and unthoughtful just because they are at home. I like to feel that my wife and my children are deserving of the best that I give others — even more so. Our families need our time and attention as well as our support. We should not make undue demands on them just because they are "ministers' wives and children."

Relationship to the Community

We cannot divorce ourselves from the community in which we live. We have certain obligations as citizens to make a contribution to our local area. However, we can become community activists to the neglect of our church work. In most cases the more responsibility one accepts in civic and educational organizations, the more he will be asked to do. It becomes a matter of establishing personal priorities within the limits of one's own available time. Churches should expect their educators to participate in the P. T. A., civic clubs, etc., but they have a right to become concerned if their ministers become chairmen of numerous civic committees which monopolize their time.

Relationship to the Denomination

As is true in the case of one's local community, it is also true that a Christian educator should have a good relationship to the denominational program. Again, it is easy to become so involved in denominational work that the local church suffers. How much a person does has to be determined by each individual as opportunities for service arise. Serving the denomination on the association-level, the state and SBC level, can be a part of an educators' total ministry. Often a man has had experiences in the local church that

will benefit others if he is allowed to share them. So we do have a responsibility within the denomination; serve your denomination, but do it wisely. Remember, if you are employed by a church, that church is paying you to serve them and not the entire denomination.

Personal Obligations

The Christian educator has an obligation to provide for himself certain opportunities. He needs time to pray and study. Most of us neglect this area of our lives. But how can we lead other people in a spiritual way unless we continue our own spiritual growth? I need to review my relationship to my Lord frequently and spend time with Him and with His Book. We need to challenge our minds with reading and study of material that will make us think.

The Christian educator needs exercise and rest. A wise teacher once told me "the best thing a tired Christian can do is rest." Many church staff members push themselves to such an extent that they are not physically able to produce their best. Regular time away from responsibility and regular exercise are essential for the best performance.

Th stewardship of my money is important. I believe in tithing, and 10% of my salary each month goes to my church. That's my concept of the way to tithe. I pay my bills, and I try to be careful not to over-extend myself as far as credit is concerned. Some church workers' reputations are ruined by irrespon-

sible financial obligations. The Christian educator should be known as a person of honesty and integrity.

“Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, what soever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.”

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